

Mr. DUNCAN of Tennessee. Mr. Speaker, later today we will vote on a resolution to reduce Federal non-security spending to the 2008 level or in some cases less. This is a very good first step if we follow through and abide by this resolution. However, we need to make sure that these cuts are real and not simply cuts that will be reinstated later in an end-of-the-year omnibus spending bill.

More importantly, I want to add my voice to the growing chorus that is saying loud and clear that nothing should be left off the table. There is waste in every Federal department and agency, and the waste in the Defense and Homeland Security Departments is huge. No department should be given a free pass and made exempt from cost savings and belt-tightening.

We have a national debt of over \$14 trillion, a mind-boggling incomprehensible figure. Even *The Washington Post*, which has usually supported every Federal spending program imaginable, editorialized recently, "It's time to stop worrying about the deficit—and start panicking about the debt. The fiscal situation was serious before the recession. It is now dire."

THE LEAVING ETHANOL AT EXISTING LEVELS ACT

(Mr. BURGESS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. BURGESS. Mr. Speaker, today I want to talk about legislation that I will reintroduce that will put a pause on the Environmental Protection Agency's actions in moving forward with a waiver for an increase in the amount of ethanol in gasoline.

Currently, gasoline contains a 10 percent blend wall. In October of this past year, the EPA granted a waiver for the allowable amount of ethanol to increase to 15 percent.

I have questioned their decision to move forward with a waiver for E15. I was wholly dissatisfied with the response they gave in a briefing last fall. They deferred to the Department of Energy's research. Does the EPA not employ its own scientists and experts? Is it the EPA's position that it is incapable of doing its own research?

Mr. Speaker, we are all aware of the problems that occurred in 2008 with food-to-fuel diversion and the resultant increase in price in commodities. I don't believe the EPA has done its due diligence. And certainly they haven't provided information that would disprove any fears about the use of E15 causing mechanical failures and fires, particularly in smaller engines.

My bill will allow for a pause and allow for more assurances to be made that the increase in the blend wall for ethanol will be safe. The security of the public's well-being should be paramount in this issue.

CALLING FOR A SPECIAL ENVOY ON RELIGIOUS MINORITIES IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND SOUTH CENTRAL ASIA

(Mr. WOLF asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. WOLF. Mr. Speaker, last week the Tom Lantos Human Rights Commission held a hearing on the plight of Christian minorities in Iraq and Egypt. In the wake of the devastating attacks targeting Christians in both countries, it is clear that religious minorities in the Middle East are facing a serious threat that must be addressed. This recent spate of violence has driven many Christians and other religious minorities to flee the lands they have inhabited for centuries and attempt to emigrate to the West. If the international community fails to speak out, the prospects for religious pluralism and tolerance in the region are bleak.

President Reagan once said that the U.S. Constitution is "a covenant that we have made not only with ourselves, but with all of mankind." I believe the United States has an obligation to speak out for the voiceless around the world.

This week I will introduce, with other Members, a bill which would require the administration to appoint a Special Envoy for religious minorities in the Middle East and South Central Asia in order to make this issue a foreign policy priority, and I ask my colleagues to join me.

□ 1410

HONORING TODD BUCH

(Mr. FITZPATRICK asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. FITZPATRICK. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the Middletown Community Foundation and to honor one of my constituents from Bucks County, Pennsylvania, Mr. Todd Buch.

Each year, the Middletown Community Foundation honors a local resident with the Humanitarian of the Year award. The Middletown Community Foundation is a nonprofit organization created to improve the quality of life for individuals who live and work in my hometown of Middletown Township, Bucks County.

This year it is the Humanitarian Award that is being presented to Mr. Todd Buch. Todd is the president of McCafferty Auto Group in Langhorne. Todd and his family have been generous and enthusiastic supporters of their community for decades, and his award from the Middletown Community Foundation is very fitting. Todd's business achievements alone have been impressive, with his dealership sustaining hundreds of jobs in Bucks County. Todd's contributions to the community have gone beyond his leadership in the business community.

Mr. Speaker, the time allotted to this speech today is frankly insufficient to list all of Todd's achievements and contributions in this regard. Just a few recipients of Todd's generosity have been the Neshaminy High School Choir, the Neshaminy High School Aloha Bowl Parade, Pennsbury High School, Bristol Township High School, the United Way, Middletown Township, and countless others.

Mr. Speaker, during a month when we honored the service of Martin Luther King, I am reminded of the great civil rights leader's quote that "anyone can be great because anyone can serve." By this measure and countless others, Todd Buch is truly great; and I am proud to honor him today.

MEDICAID

(Mr. PITTS asked and was given permission to address the House for 1 minute and to revise and extend his remarks.)

Mr. PITTS. Mr. Speaker, most States, including my own State of Pennsylvania, are facing significant budget problems this fiscal year. The fiscal situation in some States eerily resembles Greece and Ireland.

Unfortunately, the Federal Government is adding fuel to the fire with new Medicaid mandates that could cost the States billions of dollars. ObamaCare burdens the States in two ways. First, it requires them to enroll millions more beneficiaries. While the Federal Government will at first pay for the benefits of these new enrollees, the States will gradually have to start picking up the tab. Second, the Federal Government will only help cover the cost of benefits, not the administrative costs associated with all these new enrollees. Since some States will be forced to nearly double their Medicaid rolls, this will certainly hit their budgets hard.

We cannot forget that 49 of 50 States are required to balance their budgets every year. They will face the grim choice of discontinuing their Medicaid program, raising taxes, or slashing other essential government services.

We have talked a lot about ObamaCare bankrupting the Federal Government, but we can't forget that it could drive States over the cliff at the same time.

RECESS

The SPEAKER pro tempore (Mr. SMITH of Nebraska). Pursuant to clause 12(a) of rule I, the Chair declares the House in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

Accordingly (at 2 o'clock and 12 minutes p.m.), the House stood in recess subject to the call of the Chair.

□ 1715

AFTER RECESS

The recess having expired, the House was called to order by the Speaker pro